

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 3-10 are presently active in this case, Claims 1, 3-8, and 10 having been amended by way of the present Amendment.

In the outstanding Official Action, Claims 7-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph. Claim 7 has been amended in a non-narrowing manner to clarify what was initially recited as a rotating crank mechanism that is used "in place of" the reciprocating device defined in Claim 4. Claim 7 now clearly recites a geared motor with brake that is mounted on a plate fixed to the connecting rods, and the left half piece and right half piece of the split nuts are brought closer to and separated from each other via a rotating crank mechanism provided on an output shaft of the geared motor with brake. The phrase "in place of" has been deleted from Claim 7. The Applicant submits that the present application satisfies the written description requirement with respect to the invention recited in Claim 7. Accordingly, the Applicant requests the withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph.

Claims 1 and 3-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claim 1 has been amended to remove the "two sets" language and to clarify the relationship between the connecting rods and two pairs of left half piece and right half piece. Claim 1 has been amended to recite that each pair of the left half piece and the right half piece are slidably supported by the platen, and that one of the half pieces of the pair is slidably supported by the connecting rod and the other half piece is fixed to the connecting rod. Claim 3 has been amended to clarify that the link mechanism includes

a link plate. Claim 4, 5, and 8 have been amended to clearly refer to the connecting rods and the split nuts. Claim 6 has been amended as suggested on page 3 of the Official Action. Claim 7 has been amend to remove any reference to the reciprocating mechanism, thereby clarifying the claim language of Claim 7 and dependent Claims 8 and 9. Claim 10 has been amended to change "said second split ring" to "said second split nut," thereby removing the antecedent basis problem. Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of the indefiniteness rejections.

Claim 7 has been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of base Claim 1. Since the outstanding rejections of Claim 7 have been overcome for the reasons discussed above, the Applicant submits that Claim 7 is in condition for allowance. Additionally, the Applicant submits that Claim 8 and 9, which depend from Claim 7, are also in condition for allowance.

Claims 1, 3-5, and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 8-276475 (Figure 2) or Eggenberger et al. (U.S. Patent No. 3,729,283) in view of either Figures 9 and 10 of the present application or JP 2-143811. For the reasons discussed below, the Applicant requests the withdrawal of the obviousness rejection.

The basic requirements for establishing a *prima facie* case of obviousness as set forth in MPEP 2143 include (1) there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings, (2) there must be a reasonable expectation of success, and (3) the reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all of the claim limitations. The Applicant submits that a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been established in the present case because the cited references do not

teach or suggest, either when taken singularly or in combination, all of the limitations recited in Claim 1 of the present application.

Claim 1 of the present application recites a split nut opening/closing device including, among other features, split nuts including a pair of left and right half pieces that are slidably supported by guide boxes attached to a platen. The guide boxes each include two bottom plates for supporting each pair of left and right half pieces and a groove portion provided between the bottom plates for receiving a link mechanism. Claim 10 recites a split nut opening/closing device including, among other features for a mold clamping apparatus, the mold clamping apparatus including a fixed platen, a first split nut including a first half piece and a second half piece that are slidably supported by a first guide box attached to a platen. The first guide box includes two bottom plates for supporting the first half piece and the second half piece of the first split nut and a groove portion provided between the bottom plates for receiving the first link mechanism. The Applicant respectfully submits that these features are not disclosed in any of the cited references.

The Official Action does not indicate which, if any, of the cited references are being cited for the teaching of a guide box. JP 8-276475 does not depict in the figures any type of guide box attached to a platen for slidably supporting the half nuts 14a, 14b, 16a, and/or 16b.

The Eggenberger et al. reference also does not disclose a guide box as recited in Claims 1 and 10. While the Eggenberger et al. briefly mentions two shifting guides (91, 92), the structure of these features differ significantly from the guide box recited in Claims 1 and 10. Additionally, since the Eggenberger et al. reference does not disclose a link mechanism as recited in Claims 1 and 10 of the present application, the Eggenberger et al. reference clearly does not a guide box including a groove for receiving a link mechanism.

Furthermore, Figures 9 and 10 of the present application and JP 2-143811 do not

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depict any type of guide box attached to a platen for slidably supporting the half pieces (A and B). While the description of Figures 9 and 10 mentions a slide box (4), the structure of this feature differs significantly from the guide box recited in Claims 1 and 10.

Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully submits that a *prima facie* case of obviousness cannot be established with respect to Claims 1 and 10 of the present application.

Claims 3-5 are considered allowable for the reasons advanced for Claim 1 from which they depend. These claims are further considered allowable as they recite other features of the invention that are neither disclosed, taught, nor suggested by the applied references when those features are considered within the context of Claim 1.

Consequently, in view of the above discussion, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable reconsideration of this application is therefore requested.

Respectfully Submitted,

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